



United States Department of the Interior



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Decision Record

Barrick Gold U.S. Inc.
Site Specific Exploration Plan #13
Environmental Assessment
DOI-BLM-NV-L010-2010-013-EA

- Decision:** It is my decision to authorize the Barrick Gold U.S. Inc. Amendment #13 as described in the proposed action of the site specific Environmental Assessment. I concur with the analysis of the environmental impacts as contained within this site specific EA, and associated environmental analysis to which it is tiered: the 2004 Programmatic Exploration EA. I authorize the proposed action subject to the Ely District Best Management Practices with mitigation and monitoring requirements as described below.
- Mitigation:** Appropriate mitigation has been included through the Best Management Practices in the Proposed Action. See Appendix A of the Programmatic EA. An inventory for nesting migratory birds is part of this list and will be implemented by Barrick Gold U.S. Inc. during the period of April 15 through July 15. No additional mitigation is proposed as a result of the impact analysis.
- Monitoring:** Appropriate monitoring has been included through the Best Management Practices in the Proposed Action as listed in Appendix A of the Programmatic EA.
- Rationale:** Implementation of the proposed action will allow Barrick Gold U.S. Inc. to continue to explore for gold and to determine if there is economic potential for future mining of any of these gold deposits. This exploration project will be conducted in a manner that minimizes risk and impact to the environment. The impacts resulting from the proposed action will be mitigated through the application of the Ely Field Office Best Management Practices.

As a result of the analysis for the Barrick Amended Regional Exploration Plan, it is determined that the proposed action will not result in unnecessary or undue degradation to the public lands. The proposed action is in conformance with the Ely District Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (2008) and is consistent with the White Pine County Land Use Plan (2007).

/s/ Jeffrey A. Weeks

3/22/2010

Jeffrey A. Weeks
Field Manager
Egan Field Office

Date

United States Department of Interior Bureau of Land Management
Egan Field Office
Finding of No Significant Impact
Barrick Gold U.S. Inc.
Bald Mountain Mine
Site Specific Exploration Plan #13
DOI-BLM-NV-L010-2010-017-EA

- FONSI: Based on the analysis in the Environmental Assessment, I have determined that the quality of the human environment will not be significantly impacted as a result of the analysis. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.
- Rationale: This finding of no significant impact (FONSI) and conclusion is based on my consideration of the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40CFR 1508.27), both with regard to the context and the intensity of impacts described in the EA. This finding is based on the following.
- Context: The proposed action is located within the Bald Mountain Mine Exploration Plan of Operations. The site specific drill plan would add an additional 204 drill holes and 75,726 linear feet of new road for a total of 37.4 new acres of disturbance. This brings the total under this plan to 122.974 acres. The Exploration plan is bonded for up to 210 acres of disturbance which was evaluated under the 2004 Programmatic EA. This EA, tiered to the Programmatic EA, analyzed resource concerns on a site specific basis for the new 39 acres of disturbance.
- Intensity: 1) *Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.*
The Programmatic and site specific EA has considered both beneficial and adverse impacts of Exploration program. Continued exploration will help identify and delineate new ore bodies, which will in turn meet the need for precious metals and provide stimulus for the economy. Areas of exploration will either be further mined or reclaimed and revegetated. At the end of mine life, all areas except for the open pits will be returned to post mining land use.
- 2) *The degree to which the proposed action affects public health or safety.*
The proposed action will not change the affect on public health or safety. Exploration issues were adequately analyzed in the pre existing NEPA documents. No significant health or safety risks were previously identified due to general exploration.
- 3) *Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.*
The Proposed drill sites and associated new roads have been surveyed for cultural resources. Appropriate mitigation is included in the proposed action to avoid any cultural resources; therefore, there will be no impacts. The project area does not

contain any park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

4) The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.

Presently there is little controversy on the effects of the project on the quality of the human environment. The proposed drill plan will have no effect on this component which was thoroughly analyzed in the site specific and Programmatic Exploration EA. The project area is about 70 miles northwest of Ely, which is the nearest community. Present land uses include grazing, hunting, and diverse recreation. In general Nevada communities favor mining activities. Various environmental groups closely watch for negative environmental effects. The Programmatic Exploration EA for general exploration around Bald Mountain Mine received little public comment.

5) The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

There are no known effects of the proposed action identified in the EA which are considered uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks. There were also no known uncertain or unique risks that were identified in the 2010 North Operations Area FEIS, Programmatic Exploration EA or this site specific EA.

6) The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.

The proposed action does not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects and does not represent a decision in principle about a future consideration. The site specific drill plan does not establish any sort of precedent.

7) Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.

The cumulative impacts of large scale exploration plans were thoroughly analyzed in the 2010 North Operations Area FEIS and the 2004 Programmatic Exploration EA. The proposed action would not change this analysis. The site specific drill plan would not have cumulatively significant impacts that have not been previously analyzed in the referenced documents.

8) The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the NRHP or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.

No districts, sites, highways, structures or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) would be disturbed during this site specific drilling program. The proposed action will not cause the loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural or historical resources.

9) *The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the ESA of 1973.*

No known endangered or threatened species or its habitat was identified during the analysis of the 2010 North Operations Area FEIS, the 2004 Programmatic Exploration EA, or this site specific EA.

10) *Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.*

The proposed action will not violate or threaten to violate any Federal, State, or local law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.

/s/ Jeffrey A. Weeks

3/22/2010

Jeffrey A. Weeks
Field Manager
Egan Field Office

Date

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management**

**Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-NV-L0100-2010-0017
March 2010**

**Site Specific Environmental Assessment
For The
Revised Bald Mountain Area Exploration Plan
Exploration Plan #13**

***Barrick Gold U.S. Inc.
Bald Mountain Mine***

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1. INTRODUCTION

During the summer of 2004, Placer Dome planned an extensive exploration program within their claim block around Bald Mountain Mine. The extent of this project area can be seen in Map Appendix C. Placer Dome (now Barrick Gold U.S. Inc.) planned for up to 70 acres of bonded disturbance within this project area. A Programmatic EA was written for this proposal, but did not include site specific locations for the proposed disturbance. Since the time frame for the exploration program was 10 years, it was considered possible that some of this acreage of disturbance could be reclaimed and released during this time frame. Placer Dome could then disturb additional acreage as long as no more than 70 acres remained unreclaimed and unreleased at any one time. It was determined that 210 acres would be the maximum number of acres that could possibly be disturbed within this ten year time frame. This 210 acres of disturbance was used for analysis in the Programmatic EA, even though the total disturbance over the life of the project is unlikely to be that high.

In January of 2010, Barrick submitted an amendment and update to their Regional Exploration Plan. This amendment provided the bond cost estimate for disturbance of the full 210 acres and a site specific plan for 37.4 acres. The BLM requested that this new amendment be submitted as a standalone document with the appropriate baseline data specific to this proposed disturbance. This Environmental Assessment analyses the site specific impact of this 37.4 acres of proposed disturbance.

The proposed action for this site specific EA is the 37.4 exploration acres, called Amendment 13, to the 2010 Revised Bald Mountain Exploration Plan. This proposed disturbance is within the project area that was analyzed in the 2004 Bald Mountain Mine (BMM) Exploration Programmatic EA. This exploration plan EA is tiered to, and incorporates by reference, the October 2004 BMM Exploration Programmatic Environmental Assessment, the 2010 North Operations Area Final Environmental Impact Statement, and the Ely Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement, August 2008. This EA also helps to track the proposed and cumulative disturbance that is associated with the bonded 2010 Revised Bald Mountain Mine Exploration Plan. Under the Programmatic EA analysis no more than 210 acres of cumulative disturbance may occur, even if some of the acreage is fully reclaimed and released for bonding purposes.

1.1 Need for the Proposal

The need for the proposal is for the BLM to evaluate the authorization of a site specific drill plan, which is a legitimate use of the multiple-use designated public land.

The proponent's need for the proposal is to determine if economically viable precious metals-bearing deposits exist within the site specific drill sites, and define the nature and extent, shape, and economic value of precious metals-bearing deposits within the exploration Project Area.

1.2 Scoping Public Involvement and Issues

The site specific proposed action was scoped internally at the Egan Field Office scoping meeting on January 18, 2010. There are no new issues different from those described in the Programmatic

EA. These were mule deer habitat and two special status species habitat; the sage grouse and pygmy rabbit. Noxious weeds, new road proliferation and habitat fragmentation are continuing concerns that were addressed in the programmatic and will be further analyzed in this site specific plan.

1.3 Relationship to Planning

The relationship to planning is the same as described in the Programmatic EA with the addition of the Ely District Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan signed August 20, 2008.

2 PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

2.1 Proposed Action

Site specific exploration is being proposed for the project area as shown in Figure 1, Figure 2 and Figure 3 (Appendix C). The new disturbance would include approximately 75,726 linear feet of new road disturbance (27.9 acres assuming 16 ft. width) and 204 drill holes accounting for an additional 9.454 acres. Total for new proposed disturbance is 37.4 acres.

Conventional reverse circulation drilling methods will be employed, and as with previous drilling projects, a water truck, pipe truck, and one pickup truck will likely accompany the drill rigs. Both angle and vertical holes will be drilled, and drilling will be conducted using dry drilling techniques wherever possible. However, Barrick expects that drilling will be conducted wet on the majority of the holes. As with previous amendments, drill holes are expected to range from 300 feet to approximately 2,000 feet deep, with an average depth of 800 feet. Drill holes under 1,000-ft in depth will be drilled with either a track-mounted MPD 1500 or an all-terrain Foremost Explorer 1500 (or equivalent). For this amendment, the disturbance footprint for track mounted, shallow drill sites is assumed to be 0.0456 acres on slopes less than 30%, and 0.0691 acres on slopes greater than 30%. Drill holes greater than 1,000 ft deep will be drilled using a TH-75 truck-mounted unit. For this amendment, the disturbance footprint for deep drill sites is assumed to be 0.089 acres.

Disturbance footprints for roads cut on slopes greater than 30% are assumed to be 24 ft wide, and roads cut on less than 30% slope are assumed to have a 16 ft. wide disturbance corridor.

Table 1 contains a summary of the new disturbance (drill pads and roads) being proposed for the overall Project Area.

The drilling program is expected to start in February or March 2010, pending authorization. Additional exploration activity may also be conducted in this area depending upon the results of this initial program.

Reclamation of the disturbed areas will immediately follow active operations except in areas where additional development is expected. Exploration holes will be abandoned in compliance with NRS 534.425 through 534.428 before the drill rig leaves the site. An in-depth description of

exploration activities is described on pages 8 and 9 of the Programmatic EA. Reclamation of disturbed areas is described on pages 10 through 12.

Site specific standard operating procedures would be followed as shown in Appendix A.

This new proposal brings the total cumulative disturbance to 122.974 acres. This EA will analyze only the 37.4 acres of new disturbance. Table 1 summarizes this proposed disturbance along with the previously permitted disturbance under this plan.

Table 1. Disturbance Acreage (Amendment #13)

Disturbance Type	Previously Authorized Drill Holes	Proposed New Drill Holes	New Total Number	Previously Authorized Acres	Proposed Disturbance Acres	Total Acres
Shallow RC Holes >30 %	11	2	13	0.310	0.138	0.448
Shallow RC Holes 15-30	236	200	436	7.453	9.137	16.590
Shallow RC Holes <15 %	6	0	6	0.090	0	0.090
Deep RC Holes >30%	9	0	9	0.730	0	0.730
Deep RC Holes 15-30	267	2	269	10.064	0.174	10.243
Deep RC Holes <15 %	0	0	0	0.000	0	0.000
Test Pits	14	0	14	0.028	0	0.028
Bore holes	6	0	6	0.054	0	0.054
Total Drill holes	549	204	753	18.729	9.454	28.183
	Previously Authorized road	Proposed New Road	Total Feet	Previous Acres	Proposed acres	Total Acres
Constructed Road Cut under 30%	11,132	75,181	86,313	3.6	27.615	31.215
Constructed Road (general)	123,109	0	123,109	42.394	0	2.394

Disturbance Type	Previously Authorized Drill Holes	Proposed New Drill Holes	New Total Number	Previously Authorized Acres	Proposed Disturbance Acres	Total Acres
Constructed Road Cut over 30%	6,783	545	7,328	2.27	0.300	2.57
Cross Country	10,944	0	10,944	2.512	0	2.512
Total Road Disturbance	151,968	75,726	227,694	50.776	27.915	79.691
Sub total disturbance For this Plan				69.505	39.00	108.505
Disturbance Type	Previously Authorized Drill Holes	Proposed New Drill Holes	New Total Number	Previously Authorized Acres	Proposed Disturbance Acres	Total Acres
Previously Disturbed (Old South Casino Plan)				16.1 (released but included in the total acres disturbed)	0	16.1
Total				85.605	37.369	122.974
Remaining				124.395	37.369	87.026

¹ No more than 210 acres of cumulative disturbance will occur during the life of the project.

2.2 Alternatives to the Proposed Action

2.2.1 Other Alternatives

No other alternatives are needed to address unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.

2.2.2 No Action Alternative

Under the no action alternative, this site specific exploration plan would not be approved. Exploration would not occur under this plan.

3. Description of the Affected Environment and Associated Environmental Consequences

All potentially affected critical elements of the human environment and resources are described and analyzed in the Programmatic Agreement. For this exploration plan analysis, these elements and resources are divided into three categories:

1. Resources or elements that would not be present or affected by the site specific locations.
2. Resources or elements that are present at the site specific locations and could be affected, but do not need further analysis beyond what was provided in the Programmatic EA.
3. Resources or elements that may be present at the site specific locations and could be affected. These require further analysis in this EA to address potential concerns.

Each of these categories is shown below with the appropriate resources or human elements that were addressed in the Programmatic EA or that will be further addressed in this EA.

1. Following are the resources or elements that are not affected by, or located near, the site specific exploration plan:

- Threatened, Endangered and Special Status Plant Species
- Riparian Areas

2. Following are the resources or elements that are present and could be affected by the site specific exploration plan. However, there would be no site specific analysis necessary in addition to the analysis in the Programmatic EA.

- Air Quality
- Native American Religious Concerns
- Water Quality (drinking/ground)
- Wastes (hazardous or solid)
- Migratory Birds
- Vegetation
- Soils
- Geology/Minerals
- Lands/Access
- Livestock Grazing/Range
- Recreation
- Wild Horses
- Wildlife (including mule deer habitat)
- Visual Resource Management
- Hazardous Materials
- Socioeconomics

3. Following are the resources or elements that may be present at the site specific locations and could be affected. These require impact analysis in addition to the analysis in the Programmatic

EA.

Non-native, Invasive Species and Noxious Weeds
Special Status Wildlife Species (including sage grouse and pygmy rabbit habitat)
Cultural Resources

These three resources will be further described and analyzed in this EA. See the Programmatic EA for discussion of all other resources.

3.1 Non-Native, Invasive Species and Noxious Weeds

Affected Environment

Based on the Ely District inventory data, black henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger* L.) occurs in and near the immediate project area. Black henbane produces a persistent litter that effects the germination and growth of native species. It also creates shade that helps black henbane outcompete native species for light. Russian thistle, musk thistle, bull thistle, hoary cress, and Scotch thistle are found along roads or drainages leading to the project. Cheatgrass can be found in the understory of undisturbed habitats and the fire near the project area.

Environmental Effects

Proposed Action

Due to the amount of ground disturbance the Proposed Action may result in the expansion of noxious and non-native, invasive weeds. The BLM is engaged in an active noxious weed control program with the Tri County Weed Program. Barrick has been involved in a weed control program throughout their claim boundary as well and it will continue for the life of mining. Incorporating the Best Management Practices identified in the Weed Risk Assessment (Appendix B) and the SOPs (Appendix A) will minimize impacts.

No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would have no new direct or indirect impacts since there would be no new disturbance and black henbane already exist in the immediate project area.

3.2 Threatened, Endangered, and Special Status Animal Species

Affected Environment

Wildlife species of concern that could be affected on a site specific basis for this exploration plan are the sage grouse and the pygmy rabbit. No special status plant species have been identified in the project area.

Sage Grouse – Sage Grouse – Most of the drill locations would be in nesting, summering sage grouse habitat, or both, but not within wintering habitat. There are four identified leks (one active and three unknown status) in excess of two miles from the northern most proposed drill sites.

Pygmy Rabbit – The pygmy rabbit does occur in the region of the proposed action. Based on previous surveys, habitat descriptions and experience with known habitats, SRK developed a

model for predicting potential habitat. This report is summarized in the *January 2008 Biological Baseline Report* by SRK that is available at the Ely Field Office, BLM. The model shows potential habitat to the east of the proposed action and on the east side of the Ruby Marsh Road, but not within the area of the Proposed Action.

Environmental Effects

Proposed Action

Sage Grouse – There are four identified active or unknown status leks in excess of two miles from the northern most drill sites. No additional effects beyond those identified in the Programmatic EA are anticipated by the site specific proposed action.

Pygmy Rabbit – Based on the predictive model developed by SRK the area of the Proposed Action is not within pygmy rabbit habitat, therefore, the project is unlikely to affect pygmy rabbits and their habitat, or contribute to the listing of this species as Threatened or Endangered.

No Action Alternative

See page 42 of the Programmatic EA for a discussion of the potential impacts of the No Action alternative.

3.3 Cultural Resources

Affected Environment

In preparation for the Proposed Action, archaeological contractor Bob Kautz compared the disturbance locations with the known cultural resources with the area of project effects. Proposed exploration disturbances that were within or close to significant cultural sites were relocated. As a result the proposed action is located entirely within areas that have been surveyed for cultural resources within the last 10 years and would not impact any archaeological sites that have been determined eligible for nomination to the National Register.

Environmental Effects

Proposed Action

Due to careful planning to avoid impact to potentially significant archaeological sites, the proposed action would have no impact to archaeological resources.

No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would be the same as the proposed action, even if it was later permitted under the North Operations Area Plan of Operation.

3. 4 Cumulative Effects

Comprehensive analysis of cumulative impacts in the Bald Mountain Mine region is contained in Appendix B, pages B-1 through B-129 of the Bald Mountain Mine Expansion Project Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS,1995). The Programmatic EA for the Bald Mountain Mine Exploration Project complimented this document with further analysis of non-native

invasive plant species and noxious weeds, special status species (sage grouse and pygmy rabbit) and wildlife (mule deer migration). This site specific EA tiers to, and incorporates by reference, both of these documents. No further analysis of cumulative impacts is needed for this proposed action.

4.0 Proposed Mitigation Measures

Appropriate mitigation has been included through the Best Management Practices in the Proposed Action. See Appendix A. An inventory for nesting migratory birds is part of this list and will be implemented by Barrick during the period of April 15 through July 15. This time frame has been updated since the completion of the Programmatic EA and is in effect as of the signing of the new Ely District Resource Management Plan in August of 2008. No additional mitigation is proposed as a result of the impact analysis.

5.0 Monitoring

Appropriate monitoring has been included through the Best Management Practices in the Proposed Action of the Programmatic EA. See Appendix A. No additional monitoring is proposed as a result of the impact analysis.

6. Tribes, Individuals, Organizations, or Agencies Consulted

There was little public interest in the Bald Mountain Mine Programmatic Exploration EA during scoping in July of 2004 and the subsequent public comment period from September 13 to October 12, 2004. The Programmatic EA was discussed in the monthly coordination meetings with the Native American Tribes at the Ely Field Office Bureau of Land Management. This site specific EA was discussed during the tribal coordination meeting held June 18, 2009. No comments were received. A public notification regarding the proposed action was on the Ely FO website. The final EA will be posted on this site as well.

List of Preparers

U.S. Bureau of Land Management – Ely Field Office

Lynn Bjorklund	Project Lead, Plan Review, Geology/Minerals
Leslie Riley	Cultural Resources
Elvis Wall	Native American Religious Concerns
Mindy Seal	Noxious and Invasive, Non-native Weed Species; Vegetation
Gina Jones	NEPA Coordinator
Marian Lichtler	Wildlife, Riparian/Wetlands, Migratory Birds
Liz Townley	Recreation, VRM
Dave Jacobson	Wilderness
Doris Metcalf	Lands
Melanie Peterson	Hazardous Materials
Amanda Anderson	Livestock Grazing/Rangelands

7.0 References

Bald Mountain Mine, 2004. *Bald Mountain Mine Exploration Plan of Operations and Reclamation Permit Application N-78825*. October 2004

Bald Mountain Project Area Biological Baseline Report, SRK Consulting January 2008.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Ely District Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan, August 2008

8.0 Appendix A

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPs) FOR BALD MOUNTAIN MINE EXPLORATION PLAN

1. Any change or amendment to your minerals operation must be brought to the attention of the Ely District Office Manager or an authorized officer prior to implementation of the change on the ground.
2. Cultural resource inventories will be conducted on all proposed areas of potential surface disturbing impacts, including appropriate buffer zones, prior to authorization of the mineral operations. Inventories will be completed by BLM or BLM-approved cultural resource permit holders.
3. A noxious weed survey will be completed prior to any earth disturbing activity including cross-country travel. Noxious or invasive weeds that may be located on the site will be managed according to methods to be approved by the Authorized Officer. Should chemical methods be approved, the lessee must submit a Pesticide Use Proposal to the Authorized Officer 60 days prior to the planned application date. A Pesticide Application Report must be submitted to the Authorized Officer by the end of each fiscal year following chemical application.
4. Existing access must be used whenever possible. Off-road vehicular travel shall be held to an absolute minimum necessary to complete operations. Additional roads, if needed, will be kept to an absolute minimum and the location of routes must be approved by the Authorized Officer prior to construction.
5. All survey monuments, claim markers, witness corners, reference monuments, bearing trees, etc., must be protected against destruction, obliteration or damage. When operations are concluded, the operator will remove all survey markers, stakes, flagging, etc., for which the operator has no further need.
6. Removal or alteration of existing improvements (fences, cattle guards, etc.) is not allowed without prior approval of the Authorized Officer. Existing improvements will be maintained in a serviceable and safe condition. Upon completion of operations, any authorized facility alterations will be restored to the specifications of the authorized officer.
7. All vegetative clearing will be held to the minimum necessary to accommodate the planned operation.
8. No blasting will be permitted if it will be detrimental to the significant characteristics of archeological or historical values, recreation areas, known caves, water wells, or springs.

9. During periods of adverse conditions affecting soil moisture caused by climatic factors such as thawing, heavy rains, snow, flooding, or drought, all activities off existing maintained roads that create excessive surface rutting may be suspended. When adverse conditions exist, the operator will contact the Authorized Officer for an evaluation and decision based on soil types, soil moisture, slope, vegetation, and cover.
10. All trash, garbage, debris, and foreign matter must be removed and properly disposed. Site must be maintained and left in a clean and safe condition. Burning will not be allowed at the site.
11. No oil or lubricants will be drained onto the ground surface. Any spills under 25 gallons will be immediately cleaned up; spills over 25 gallons will be reported to the Authorized Officer and NDEP.
12. All construction, operation, and maintenance activities will comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations regarding the use of hazardous substances and the protection of air and water quality.
13. The operator will work with the Authorized Officer on the containment of drilling fluids and drill hole cuttings. Mud, separation pits, and other containments used for the storage of any hazardous materials will be adequately fenced, posted, and/or covered.
14. Powder magazines will be located at least 0.25-mile from traveled roads. Loaded shot holes and charges will be attended at all times. Use of explosives will be according to applicable Federal and State regulations.
15. The operator will make every effort to prevent, control, or suppress any fire in the operating area. The operator may be required to have fire-fighting equipment available on-site while operations are in progress, depending on hazards inherent in the type of operation and fire hazard levels. Reports of uncontrolled fires will be relayed immediately to the Ely District Office Manager or Authorized Officer. The BLM Fire Dispatch telephone number is (775) 289-1925 or 1-800-633-6092. After working hours call 911 or the White Pine County Sheriff's office at (775) 289-8801, the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office at (775) 962-5151, or the Nye county Sheriff's Office at (775) 482-8101.
16. Lands containing unstable/highly erodible soils may require additional protective measures such as restrictions on surface entry during periods of excessive runoff, avoidance of selected areas, and special reclamation techniques.
17. All decisions issued by the Ely District Office will have a Needs Assessment completed in accordance with the Nevada BLM and SHPO Protocol.
18. Documentation (photos, drawings, etc.) will be collected on all sites eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. This will allow tracking of human and natural caused deterioration.

19. If cultural resources (historic or archaeological materials) are discovered during construction, the operator is to immediately stop work protect such materials, and contact the Authorized Officer. Within five working days, the Authorized Officer will inform the operator as to:
 - a. The appropriate treatment measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not feasible);
 - b. A timeframe for the Authorized Officer to complete an expedited review and necessary consultation;
 - c. The operator's responsibility for treatment costs; and
 - d. Technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of the treatment. Upon verification from the Authorized Officer that the required treatment has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.
20. All identified cultural resources will be avoided by project-related activities per the Nevada BLM standards for cultural resources. If avoidance is not feasible, mineral activities must cease until mitigating measures or treatments are developed and implemented and Section 106 consultation is completed. Archaeological monitors may be required in special cases.
21. The operator is responsible for informing all persons associated with the project that knowingly disturbing cultural resources (historic or archaeological) or collecting artifacts is illegal.
22. During winter operations, requirements for cultural resource inventories may be waived by the Authorized Officer if the unsurveyed areas are located on bare and frozen ground or are completely covered (100%) by snow and the snow is sufficiently deep (approximately 4 to 6 inches) to prevent ground disturbing ruts. Should conditions change while operations are in progress, additional considerations may be necessary. The operator must contact the authorized officer to determine if an archaeological monitor or an inventory may be required prior to continuance of mineral activities.
23. Any activity planned within the viewshed of the Pony Express National Historic Trail or other National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) properties, listed National Register Districts, or properties eligible under criterion A, must undergo a visual assessment. Appropriate mitigation of visual impacts will be implemented as necessary to keep the setting of the management corridor in as natural a condition as possible. Special reclamation measures may be required to restore the setting to its natural condition.
24. Under no circumstances will wild horses, burros, wildlife, or livestock be willfully harassed. When traveling roads, all livestock gates will be closed after use.

25. To protect wildlife and wild horses, perimeter fences will be flagged every 16 feet with white flagging. The flagging should be at least one inch wide and with at least twelve inches hanging free from the top wire of the fence. Fences will also avoid obvious horse migration routes (deep trails, stud piles) if at all possible.
26. If the project involves heavy or sustained traffic, road signs for safety and protection of wild horses and wildlife will be required.
27. Any new disturbance commencing between April 15 and July 15 must first be surveyed for nesting migratory birds. If nests are found, the project may be moved or delayed until July 15.
28. Any identified bald eagle roost sites, peregrine falcon hawk sites, and occupied raptor aeries (nests) will be avoided during mineral operations. A 0.5-mile buffer zone will be imposed on all activities around occupied nests.
29. Actions which will adversely impact a special status species (including federally listed, proposed, and candidate species, state protected species, and BLM sensitive species or its habitat, will be modified in order to prevent possible future listing of these species as threatened or endangered. The following restrictions apply to the following species:
 - a. Sage Grouse. No surface disturbance will be allowed within an active sage grouse lek. No surface use will be allowed within ½ mile of an active sage grouse lek from midnight until 10 a.m. during the period March 15 through May 31.
 - b. Ferruginous Hawk. Ferruginous Hawk nest sites will not be disturbed. No surface use will be allowed within ½ mile of an occupied Ferruginous Hawk nest during the period March 1 through June 30 or until the birds have fledged (left) the nest.
 - c. Mule Deer Habitat SOP
Within the Ely District, there are identified mule deer key habitats. (Key Habitats include habitats such as crucial habitats. These habitats are essential to populations of big game. If elements of these habitats are compromised, the results could be detrimental to the population.) Therefore, prior to entry onto the land, the operator will discuss the proposed activity with the appropriate Bureau of Land Management's authorized officer. Additional measures may be required for the protection of the deer and their habitat which may include:
 - i. Limitation on surface use during the period of crucial deer use.
 - ii. Minimizing disturbance to habitat and forage.
 - d. Pygmy Rabbit SOP - Within the Ely District, there are favorable habitats selected by pygmy rabbits as burrowing areas. Therefore, prior to entry into these areas the operator will discuss the proposed activities with the Bureau of Land Managements authorized officer who may require additional measures for the protection of pygmy rabbits and their habitats. Such measures may include:

- i. Avoidance of selected areas
 - ii. Restriction of activities near burrows during the months of April through June.
30. To eliminate the transport of vehicle-borne weed seeds, roots, or rhizomes, all vehicles and heavy equipment used for the completion, maintenance, inspection, or monitoring of ground disturbing activities; for emergency fire suppression; or for authorized off-road driving will be free of soil and debris capable of transporting weed propagules. All such vehicles and equipment will be cleaned with power or high pressure equipment prior to entering or leaving the work site or project area. Vehicles used for emergency fire suppression will be cleaned as a part of check-in and demobilization procedures. Cleaning efforts will concentrate on tracks, feet or tires, and on the undercarriage. Special emphasis will be applied to axles, frames, cross members, motor mounts, on and underneath steps, running boards, and front bumper/brush guard assemblies. Vehicle cabs will be swept out and refuse will be disposed of in waste receptacles. Cleaning sites will be recorded using GPS or other mutually acceptable equipment and provided to the BLM Weed Coordinator or designated contact person.
31. Prior to the entry of vehicles and equipment to a project area, areas of concern will be identified and flagged in the field by a weed scientist or qualified biologist. The flagging will alert personnel or participants to avoid areas of concern.
32. Prior to entering public lands, the Contractor, Operator, or permit holder will provide information and training regarding noxious weed management and identification to all personnel who will be affiliated with the implementation and maintenance phases of the project. The importance of preventing the spread of weeds to uninfested areas and the importance of controlling existing populations of weeds will be explained.
33. To eliminate the transport of soil-borne noxious weed seeds, roots, or rhizomes, infested soils or materials will not be moved and redistributed on weed-free or relatively weed-free areas. In areas where infestations are identified or noted and infested soils, rock, or overburden must be moved, these materials will be salvaged and stockpiled adjacent to the area from which they were stripped. Appropriate measures will be taken to minimize wind and water erosion of these stockpiles. During reclamation, the materials will be returned to the area from which they were stripped.
34. Prior to project approval, a site specific weed survey will occur and a Weed Risk Assessment will be completed. Monitoring will be conducted for a period no shorter than the life of the permit or until bond release and monitoring reports will be provided to the BLM. If the spread of noxious weeds is noted, appropriate weed control procedures will be determined in consultation with BLM personnel and will be in compliance with the appropriate BLM Handbook sections and applicable laws and regulations. All weed control efforts on BLM lands will be in compliance with BLM Handbook H-9011, H-9011-1 Chemical Pest Control, H-9014 Use of Biological Control Agents of Pests on Public Lands, and H-9015 Integrated Pest Management. Submission of Pesticide Use Proposals (PUPs) and Pesticide Application Records (PARs) will be required.

35. All vehicles and heavy equipment used for the completion, maintenance, inspection, or monitoring of ground disturbing activities; for emergency fire suppression; or for authorized off-road driving that are used to drive through, mow, harvest, scrape, or otherwise contact plant species listed on the Nevada Noxious Weed list or specifically identified by the Ely District Office will be cleaned prior to continued use in weed free areas. Cleaning requirements are described in SOP# 1.2.5.4.
36. For mineral activity, retain bonds for weed control until the site is returned to desired vegetative conditions.
37. To provide for effective rehabilitation of the disturbed area, all available growth medium, as practical, will be removed and stockpiled. Any trees removed will be separated from soils and stockpiled separately.
38. Topsoil stockpiles and road berms, if scheduled to be left in place over the growing season, will be seeded with an approved site-specific interim seed mix to reduce erosion, preserve the biological flora and fauna, and prevent the establishment of noxious weeds and other undesirable plant species.
39. The operator shall reclaim the disturbed area concurrently or at the earliest feasible time by recontouring to conform with pre-existing topography (including filling of trenches), to the extent possible, followed by redistribution of stockpiled topsoil over the reclaimed area. Compacted areas will be ripped to a depth of 12 inches unless in solid rock. Ripped areas may need further work to break up large clods and produce a fine-grained seed bed.
40. Site preparation for reclamation may include contour furrowing, terracing, reduction of steep cut and fill slopes, and the installation of water bars, etc.
41. Reseeding may be required, in which case a site-specific seed mixture will be recommended by the operator and approved by the Authorized Officer. Seeding is recommended only between October 1 and March 15 for the northern part of the District, and November 1 through March 1 for the southern part of the District.
42. Reclamation will normally be accomplished with native seeds only. These will be representative of the indigenous species present in the adjacent habitat. Rationale for potential seeding with selected non-natives must be documented. Possible exceptions could include use of non-natives for a temporary cover crop to out-complete weeds. Where large acreages are burned by the fires and seeding is required for erosion control, all native species can be cost prohibitive and/or unavailable. In all cases, seed mixes will be approved by the Authorized Officer prior to planting.
43. All interim and final seed mixes, hay, straw, and hay/straw products must be tested for noxious weeds and certified free of plant species listed on the Nevada Noxious Weed list.

44. All drill holes must be plugged per Nevada State statute (Division of Water Resources “Regulations for Water Well and Related Drilling”) as warranted. If artesian flow is encountered, the drill hole must be plugged immediately. The location, depth, and relative flow rate of any water intercepted shall be reported to the Ely District Office Manager or the Authorized Officer. Drill cuttings will be returned to the hole if possible, or at a minimum, raked and spread out so as not to impede regrowth of vegetation or to create erosion problems.
45. The Ely District Office Manager or the Authorized Officer will be notified within 5 days of completion of reclamation work so that timely compliance inspections can be completed.
46. The area is considered to be satisfactorily reclaimed when all disturbed areas have been recontoured to blend with the natural topography, erosion has been stabilized, and an acceptable vegetative cover has been established. The Nevada Guidelines for Successful Revegetation for the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection, the Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S.D.A Forest Service (or most current revision or replacement of this document) will be used to determine if revegetation is successful.
47. In areas of known noxious weed infestations, monitoring of noxious weeds will be conducted on an annual basis. Monitoring will be conducted until project release. If the spread of noxious weeds is noted, the infested areas will be further evaluated to determine the appropriate remedial action and appropriate treatment. Appropriate weed control procedures, including target species, timing of control, and method of control, will be determined in consultation with BLM personnel.
48. No noxious weeds will be allowed on the site for reclamation release. Any noxious weeds that become established will be controlled.

Appendix B

RISK ASSESSMENT FOR NOXIOUS & INVASIVE WEEDS

Bald Mountain Mine Exploration Plan #13

White Pine County, Nevada

Site specific exploration is being proposed for the project area as shown in Figure 2 (Appendix C). The new disturbance would include approximately 75,726 linear feet of new road disturbance (27.9 acres assuming 16 ft. width) and 204 drill holes accounting for an additional 9.454 acres. Total for new proposed disturbance is 37.4 acres.

Conventional reverse circulation drilling methods will be employed, and as with previous drilling projects, a water truck, pipe truck, and one pickup truck will likely accompany the drill rigs. Both angle and vertical holes will be drilled, and drilling will be conducted using dry drilling techniques wherever possible. However, Barrick expects that drilling will be conducted wet on the majority of the holes.

Black henban (*Hyoscyamus niger*), musk thistle (*Carduus nutans*), and bull thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*) are found in the in the immediate area of the proposed action. The following species are found along roads and drainages leading to the project area:

Bull Thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
Musk thistle	<i>Carduus nutans</i>
Spotted knapweed	<i>Centaurea stoebe</i>
Canada Thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>
Black henbane	<i>Hyoscyamus niger</i>
Hoary cress	<i>Lepidium draba</i>
Scotch thistle	<i>Onoropodum acanthium</i>
Russian knapweed	<i>Acroptilon repens</i>

This area was inventoried in 2002 through 2008. While not mapped there is also probably cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*), halogeton (*Halogeton glomeratus*), and Russian thistle (*Salsola kali*) scattered throughout the area.

Factor 1 assesses the likelihood of noxious/invasive weed species spreading to the project area.

None (0)	Noxious/invasive weed species are not located within or adjacent to the project area. Project activity is not likely to result in the establishment of noxious/invasive weed species in the project area.
Low (1-3)	Noxious/invasive weed species are present in the areas adjacent to but not within the project area. Project activities can be

	implemented and prevent the spread of noxious/invasive weeds into the project area.
Moderate (4-7)	Noxious/invasive weed species located immediately adjacent to or within the project area. Project activities are likely to result in some areas becoming infested with noxious/invasive weed species even when preventative management actions are followed. Control measures are essential to prevent the spread of noxious/invasive weeds within the project area.
High (8-10)	Heavy infestations of noxious/invasive weeds are located within or immediately adjacent to the project area. Project activities, even with preventative management actions, are likely to result in the establishment and spread of noxious/invasive weeds on disturbed sites throughout much of the project area.

This project rates as Moderate (6) at the present time. With the high amount of ground disturbance and heavy equipment it is likely that some areas within the project area will become infested.

Factor 2 assesses the consequences of noxious/invasive weed establishment in the project area.

Low to Nonexistent (1-3)	None. No cumulative effects expected.
Moderate (4-7)	Possible adverse effects on site and possible expansion of infestation within the project area. Cumulative effects on native plant communities are likely but limited.
High (8-10)	Obvious adverse effects within the project area and probable expansion of noxious/invasive weed infestations to areas outside the project area. Adverse cumulative effects on native plant communities are probable.

For this project, the factor rates as Moderate (6) at the present time. New infestation of weeds within the project area would have possible cumulative effects on the surrounding native plant communities however most of the area surrounding the project area is already disturbed with other mining operations. Any increase in cheatgrass in the project area could alter the fire regime in the area.

The Risk Rating is obtained by multiplying Factor 1 by Factor 2.

None (0)	Proceed as planned.
Low (1-10)	Proceed as planned. Initiate control treatment on noxious/invasive weed populations that get established in the area.
Moderate	Develop preventative management measures for the proposed

(11-49)	project to reduce the risk of introduction of spread of noxious/invasive weeds into the area. Preventative management measures should include modifying the project to include seeding the area to occupy disturbed sites with desirable species. Monitor the area for at least 3 consecutive years and provide for control of newly established populations of noxious/invasive weeds and follow-up treatment for previously treated infestations.
High (50-100)	Project must be modified to reduce risk level through preventative management measures, including seeding with desirable species to occupy disturbed site and controlling existing infestations of noxious/invasive weeds prior to project activity. Project must provide at least 5 consecutive years of monitoring. Projects must also provide for control of newly established populations of noxious/invasive weeds and follow-up treatment for previously treated infestations.

For this project, the Risk Rating is Moderate (36) at the present time. Preventive management measures for noxious weeds should be developed to prevent spread of noxious species into the project area. These measures (mitigation) are as follows:

- Prior to entering public lands, the contractor, operator, or permit holder will provide information and training regarding noxious weed management and identification to all personnel who will be affiliated with the implementation and maintenance phases of the project. The importance of preventing the spread of weeds to uninfested areas and importance of controlling existing populations of weeds will be explained.
- Prior to the entry of vehicles and equipment to a project area, areas of concern will be identified and flagged in the field by a weed scientist or qualified biologist. The flagging will alert personnel or participants to avoid areas of concern. These sites will be recorded using global positioning systems or other Ely District Office approved equipment and provided to the District Office Weed Coordinator or designated contact person.
- To eliminate the transport of vehicle-borne weed seeds, roots, or rhizomes all vehicles and heavy equipment used for the completion and maintenance of ground disturbing activities will be free of soil and debris capable of transporting weed propagules. All such vehicles and equipment will be cleaned with power or high pressure equipment prior to entering or leaving the work site or project area. Cleaning efforts will concentrate on tracks, feet and tires, and on the undercarriage. Special emphasis will be applied to axels, frames, cross members, motor mounts, on and underneath steps, running boards, and front bumper/brush guard assemblies. Vehicle cabs will be swept out and refuse will be disposed of in waste receptacles. Cleaning sites will be recorded using global positioning systems or other mutually acceptable equipment and provided to the District Office Noxious and Invasive Weed Coordinator or designated contact person.
- Removal and disturbance of vegetation would be kept to a minimum through construction site management (e.g. using previously disturbed areas and existing easements, limiting equipment/materials storage and staging area sites, etc.)

- To eliminate the introduction of noxious weed seeds, roots, or rhizomes all source sites such as borrow pits, fill sources, or gravel pits used to supply inorganic materials used for construction, maintenance, or reclamation will be inspected and found to be free of plant species listed on the Nevada noxious weed list or specifically identified by the BLM Ely District Office. Inspections will be conducted by a weed scientist or qualified biologist.
- To eliminate the introduction of noxious weed seeds, roots, or rhizomes all interim and final seed mixes, hay, straw, hay/straw, or other organic products used for reclamation or stabilization activities, feed, bedding will be certified free of plant species listed on the Nevada noxious weed list or specifically identified by the BLM Ely District Office.
- If the spread of noxious weeds is noted, appropriated weed control procedures will be determined in consultation with BLM personnel and will be in compliance with the appropriate BLM handbook sections and applicable laws and regulations. All weed control efforts on BLM-administered lands will be in compliance with BLM Handbook H-9011, H-9011-1 Chemical Pest Control, H-9014 Use of Biological Control Agents of Pests on Public Lands, and H-9015 Integrated Pest Management. Should chemical methods be approved, the lessee must submit a Pesticide Use Proposal to the Authorized Officer 60 days prior to the planned application date. A pesticide Application Report must be submitted to the Authorized Officer by the end of the fiscal year follow chemical application.
- Mixing of herbicides and rinsing of herbicide containers and spray equipment would be conducted only in areas that are safe distance from environmentally sensitive areas and points of entry to bodies of water (storm drains, irrigation ditches, streams, lakes, or wells).
- Reclamation would normally be accomplished with native seeds only. These would be representative of the indigenous species present in the adjacent habitat. Rationale for potential seeding with selected nonnative species would be documented. Possible exceptions would include use of non-native species for a temporary cover crop to out-compete weeds. Where large acreages are burned by fires and seeding is required for erosion control, all native species could be cost prohibitive and/or unavailable. In all cases, seed mixes would be approved by the BLM Authorized Officer prior to planting.
- No noxious weeds will be allowed on the site at the time of reclamation release. Any noxious weeds that become established will be controlled.

Reviewed by: /s/Mindy Seal

Mindy Seal
Natural Resource Specialist

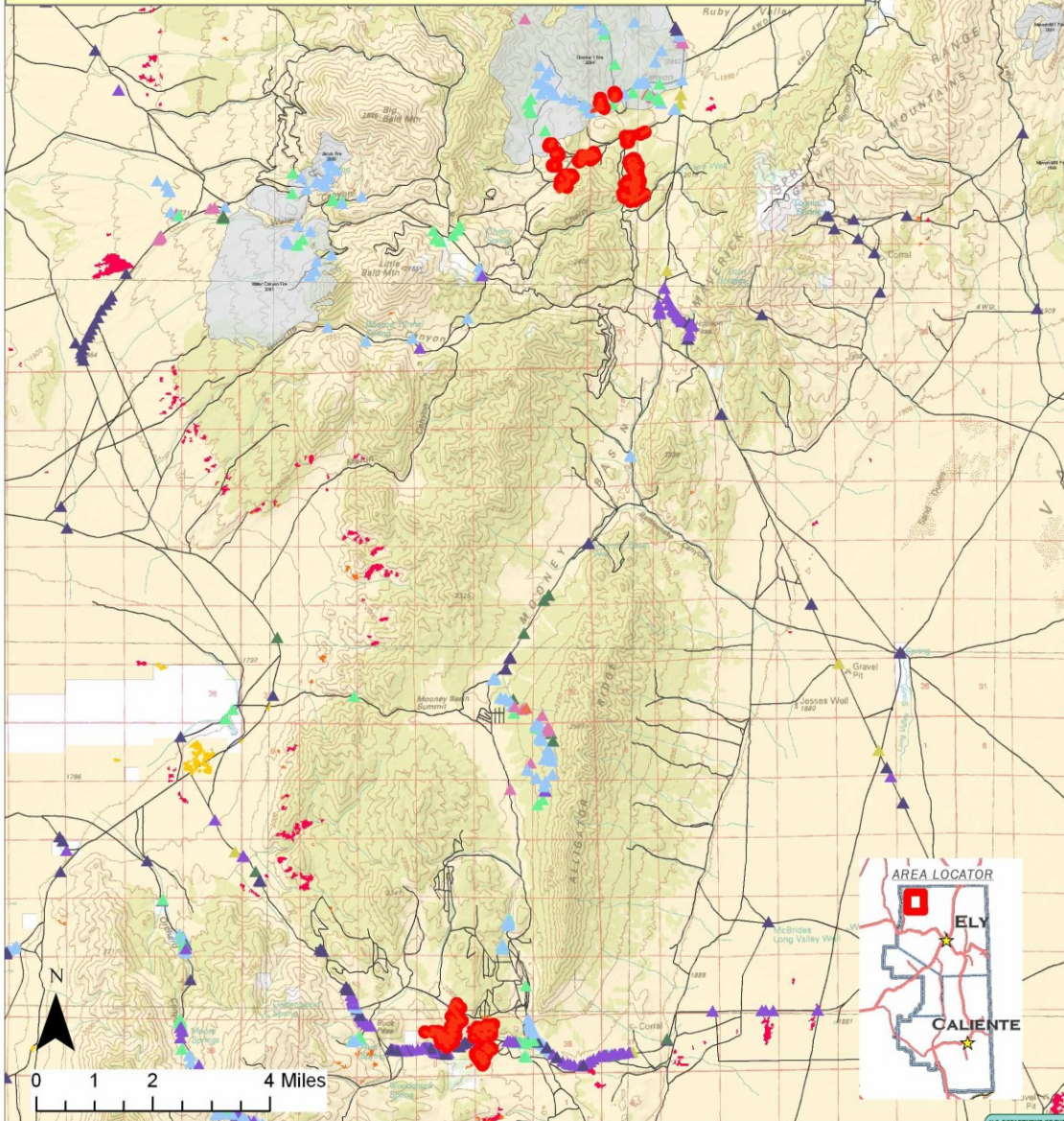
3/18/2010

Date

Barrick #13

Inventoried Noxious and Non Native Invasive Weeds

BLM



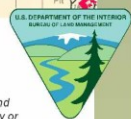
Legend

- | | | |
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Commonname
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BLACK HENBANE BULL THISTLE CANADA THISTLE MUSK THISTLE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RUSSIAN KNAWEED SCOTCH THISTLE SPOTTED KNAWEED WHITETOPHOARY CRESS Invasive Annual and Biennial Forb/land Invasive Annual Grassland Invasive Perennial Grassland |
|---|---|--|

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Inventoried 2002-2008
Map Produced by: EYDO Weed Staff
3/18/2010

Ely District Office



Appendix C



Figure 1. Location of northern proposed exploration drill sites, White Pine County, Nevada.

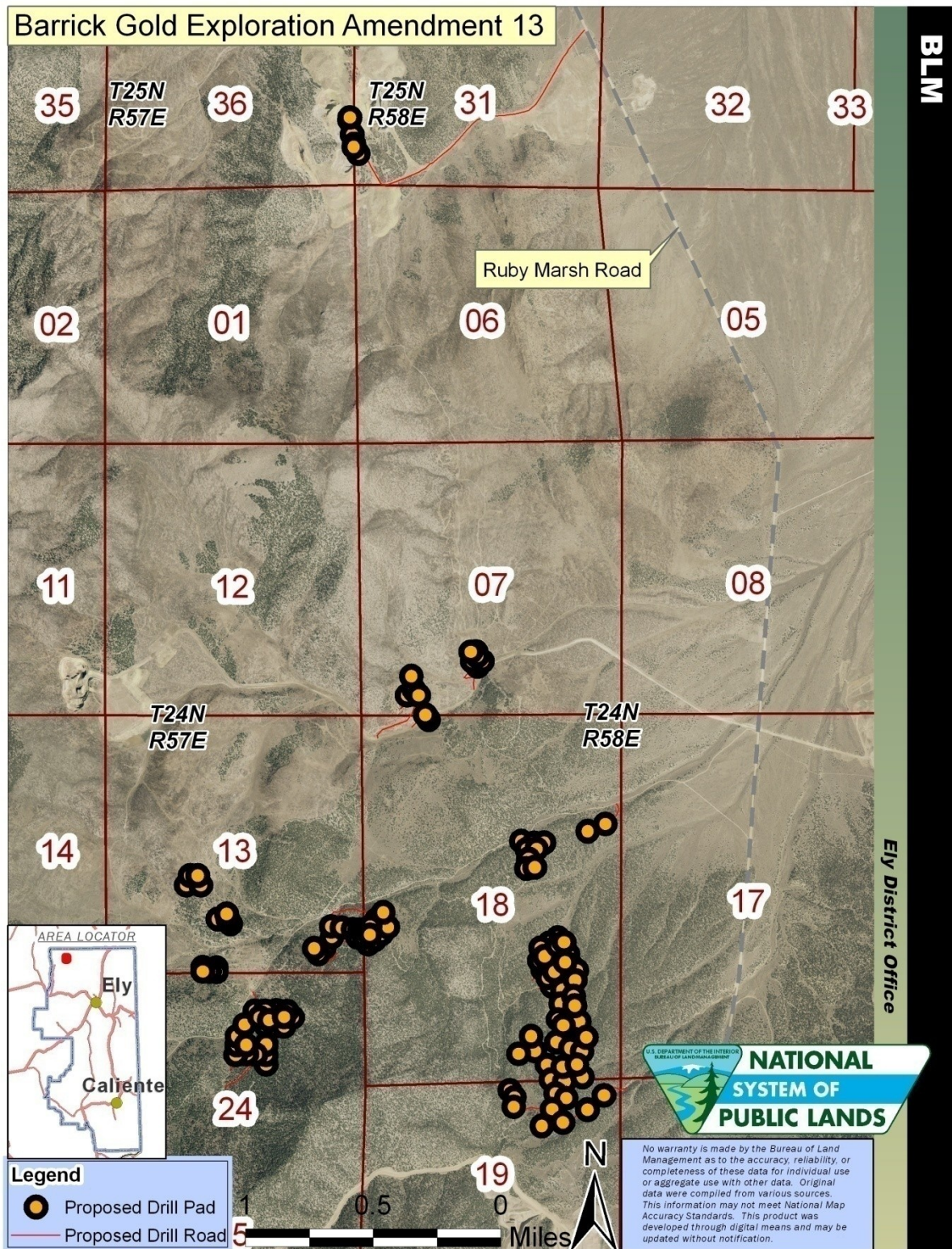


Figure 2. Barrick Gold U.S., Inc. northern proposed drill sites and roads, White Pine County, Nevada

